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UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

OCT 30 2008

OFFICE OF
WATER

Mr. B. Roy Prescott,
Chair, Local Government Advisory Committee
135 N 800 E
Jerome, Idaho 83338

Dear Mr. Prescott:

Thank you for your letter to Administrator Stephen L. Johnson, dated July 30, 2008. Administrator Johnson has asked me to respond on his behalf. I appreciate your interest in the Clean Watersheds Needs Survey (CWNS) and believe that we have benefited from the ad hoc input that the LGAC provided in our preparation for the current survey (CWNS 2008).

I also appreciate your commendation of efforts to simplify the data collection process. One of our major goals for CWNS 2008, which I believe you share, is to improve reporting in underreported communities. Making the data collection easier for local governments and small communities is important to achieve that goal. Equally important is outreach and communication about the CWNS. In addition to the valuable outreach LGAC provides, our staff conducted outreach campaigns with small communities and local government programs to collect needs information for reducing nonpoint source (NPS) and other pollution.

The Agency shares your interest in making information available in a more timely fashion. Recognizing the value to our water program partners in having access to the most current information possible, we are taking steps to ensure timely availability of CWNS 2008 information. The Agency also shares your interest in including NPS needs in the CWNS Report to Congress. NPS needs were included in the Report's appendix in order to facilitate comparability between infrastructure needs in the main body of the Report and infrastructure needs included in the Agency's Infrastructure Gap Analysis Report. Following completion of CWNS 2008, the OWM will invite LGAC and other stakeholders to engage in discussions on options for evolving CWNS for the next survey in 2012. That effort will inform our work with the Office of Management and Budget on the survey's Information Collection Request (ICR) approval.

Thank you again for your ongoing engagement with the CWNS. EPA is fortunate to have dynamic stakeholders like the LGAC helping to advance and utilize the CWNS.

Sincerely,

Sheila E. Frace

Sheila E. Frace
Director
Municipal Support Division

cc: Frances Eargle, DFO
Jimmy Kemp, LGAC